

THE WHITE HOUSE

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REMARKS

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comments / corrections

Thanks - Bob

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Remarks by

FAITH RYAN WHITTLESEY

Central American Outreach Briefing

Wednesday, July 18, 1984

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GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO THE WHITE HOUSE COMPLEX AND THIS OUR 63RD MEETING OF THE OUTREACH WORKING GROUP ON CENTRAL AMERICA.

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, TOMORROW MARKS THE THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SANDINISTA TAKEOVER IN NICAPAGUA. OUR SPEAKERS TODAY, MR. EDGARD MACIAS AND MR. MIGUEL BOLANOS HUNTER, REPRESENT THE HOPE AND THE REALITY OF THE SANDINISTA REGIME. BOTH OF THESE GENTLEMEN FOUGHT LONG AND BRAVELY AGAINST THE DICTATORSHIP OF ANASTASIO SOMOZA AND SHARED THE HOPES OF MANY OF THEIR COUNTRYMEN THAT THE NICARAGUA OF TOMORROW WOULD BE A COUNTRY OF FREEDOM AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

TODAY, FIVE YEARS LATER, WE MUST SADLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT FAR FROM ESTABLISHING THE REGIME THEY PROMISED, THE NINE "COMANDANTES" OF THE RULING SANDINISTA PARTY HAVE MOVED TO ELIMINATE, INTIMIDATE OR SUBVERT ANY ORGANIZATION THAT DARES TO OPPOSE THE SANDINISTAS" DRIVE TO ESTABLISH A MARXIST-LENINIST TOTALITARIAN STATE.

EDGARD MACIAS WAS VICE MINISTER OF LABOR AFTER THE TRIUMPH. HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT, AS A MEMBER OF THE POPULAR SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY, REPRESENTED THE HOPE THAT THE REVOLUTION WOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARDS THE DESIRE OF THE PEOPLE FOR FREEDOM AND MODERATION. WHILE HE IS ON THIS PLATFORM IT IS USEFUL TO RECALL THE WORDS OF A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE LEADERS OF ONE OF THIS COUNTRY'S LARGEST UNIONS, THE AFL-CIO. A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE UNION'S 15TH CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION READS AS FOLLOWS:

"THE HOPES RAISED BY THE JULY 1979 VICTORY OF THE SANDINISTA REVOLUTION HAVE BEEN SHATTERED. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, BACKED BY THE AFL-CIO, HAD DEMONSTRATED ITS SUPPORT OF THE REVOLUTION BY GRANTING SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT. BUT THAT GOVERNMENT HAS BECOME DOMINATED BY TOTALITARIAN ELEMENTS WHICH HAVE ESTABLISHED A DICTATORSHIP THAT ALL BUT DESTROYED THE RIGHT TO STRIKE, TO ORGANIZE, OR TO BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY WITHOUT INTERFERENCE.

"CUBAN STYLE BLOCK COMMITTEES REQUIRING BROTHER TO SPY ON BROTHER HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED UNDER THE NEW SANDINISTA POLICE STATE. THE LAST REMAINING INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER, LA PRENSA, HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY SHUT DOWN. THE RIGHT OF HABEAS CORPUS IS NON-EXISTENT."

THIS IS THE REALITY OF THE SANDINISTA REGIME. THE BETRAYAL OF THE REVOLUTION MAY CULMINATE THIS FALL IN WHAT THE SANDINISTAS CALL AN ELECTION. AN ELECTION THEY HAVE ALREADY SAID WILL BE HELD ONLY TO "CONSOLIDATE REVOLUTIONARY POWER."

MIGUEL BOLANOS, AS A MEMBER OF THE SANDINISTA SECRET POLICE, SAW FIRSTHAND THE HARSHNESS OF THE SANDINISTA REALITY. HE SAW THE ARRESTS, THE DISAPPEARANCES, THE EARLY ARRIVAL OF CUBAN AND SOVIET BLOC ^{MILITARY} TROOPS AND ADVISORS. WHEN HE SAW WHAT THE SANDINISTAS INTENDED TO DO WITH THE REVOLUTION HE HELPED WIN, HE DECIDED IT WAS TIME FOR HIM AND HIS FAMILY TO LEAVE.

THE APPEARANCE OF THESE TWO GENTLEMEN TOGETHER IS INDEED AN EXTRAORDINARY EVENT. MR. MACIAS SPOKE OUT FOR DEMOCRACY AND THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF SANDINO WHILE HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT. THE MARXIST-LENINIST LEADERSHIP OF NICARAGUA FOUND THE NOTION OF DEMOCRACY AND NON-ALIGNMENT INTOLERABLE AND MARKED BOTH EDGARD AND HIS WIFE GERALDINE FOR ASSASSINATION.

THE COUNTERINTELLIGENCE OFFICER IN THE SANDINISTA SECRET POLICE WHO WAS ASSIGNED TO CARRY OUT THIS ASSASSINATION IS TODAY'S SECOND SPEAKER, MIGUEL BOLANOS HUNTER. JUST AFTER MR. BOLANOS DEFECTED FROM NICARAGUA LAST SUMMER, HE APOLOGIZED TO THE MACIAS',

MIGUEL'S DEFECTION WAS A RESULT OF HIS CONCLUSION THAT THE REVOLUTION HE FOUGHT FOR WAS POSING A DANGER TO HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY. EDGARD AND GERALDINE MACIAS HAD REACHED THAT CONCLUSION SOME MONTHS EARLIER. THEY ARE APPEARING TOGETHER TODAY AS REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL THE REFUGEES THE SANDINISTA REGIME HAS CREATED IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS.

THE LARGEST NUMBER OF REFUGEES THAT THE SANDINISTA REGIME HAS CREATED HAVE COME FROM THE MISKITO, SUMO AND RAMA INDIAN POPULATIONS OF THE ATLANTIC COAST. THESE PEACEFUL PEOPLE COMMITTED WHAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN CONSIDERED A CRIME IN TOTALITARIAN REGIMES - THEY ASKED TO BE LEFT ALONE. THE ATLANTIC COAST INDIANS WERE PART OF THE ANTI-SOMOZA COALITION THAT WAS VICTORIOUS FIVE YEARS AGO.

NEVERTHELESS, THEY HAVE BECOME VICTIMS OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST LEADERSHIP IN MANAGUA. BEGINNING IN 1980, THE LIVES OF THE INDIANS WERE REDRAWN ALONG MARXIST LINES AND CUBAN PERSONNEL BEGAN TO ENTER THE ATLANTIC COAST AREA. THESE CUBANS SOMETIMES SUPPLANTED THE ELECTED TRIBAL LEADERS AND SOME OF THESE LEADERS WERE ARRESTED.

BEGINNING IN 1981, BEFORE ANY SERIOUS FREEDOM FIGHTER ACTIVITY BEGAN, THOUSANDS OF INDIANS WERE FORCIBLY MOVED INTO RELOCATION CAMPS. ONE ^{HALF} ~~FOUR~~ OF THE COAST'S ^{60,000} ~~165,000~~ INDIANS ARE NOW EITHER IN RELOCATION CAMPS OR REFUGEE CAMPS. EYEWITNESSES REPORT THAT ONE-HALF OF MISKITO AND SUMO VILLAGES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED. IN THE PROCESS, THE MISKITOS' CHURCHES HAVE BEEN BURNED, THEIR CROPS DESTROYED, FRUIT TREES CUT DOWN, AND FISHING AND HUNTING VIRTUALLY OUTLAWED. -

AT THE SAME TIME, THE DEEP RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS OF THE INDIANS WERE RIDICULED BY THE CUBAN AND NICARAGUAN COMMUNISTS. FREEDOM TO PRACTICE THEIR RELIGION WAS CURTAILED.

THE MARXIST-LENINIST LED SANDINISTA GOVERNMENT, SINCE ITS INCEPTION, HAS CONSIDERED THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AN ENEMY. THE SANDINISTAS REVEALED THEIR PLANS FOR NEUTRALIZING BOTH THE CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT CHURCHES ONLY A FEW MONTHS AFTER COMING TO POWER.

ACCORDING TO THE 72 HOUR DOCUMENT, THE PRINTED RECORD OF A MEETING OF THE SANDINISTA LEADERSHIP HELD IN SEPTEMBER 1978, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WAS TO BE TREATED CORDIALLY: "FOLLOWING A CAUTIOUS POLICY DESIGNED TO NEUTRALIZE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS, DEVELOP CLOSE TIES TO SYMPATHETIC ELEMENTS, AND STIMULATE THE REVOLUTIONARY SECTORS."

IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS THE VENEER OF CORDIALITY HAS BEEN DROPPED. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY HAS BEEN ATTACKED IN THE OFFICIAL PRESS. THE BISHOPS HAVE BEEN CALLED A "RACE OF TRAITORS." JUST LAST WEEK TEN FOREIGN PRIESTS WERE EXPELLED BY THE SANDINISTAS. THE ONLY CRIME ^{SEVEN OF} THESE ~~TEN~~ PRIESTS COMMITTED WAS PARTICIPATING IN A DEMONSTRATION OF SUPPORT FOR ONE OF THEIR BRETHREN. FATHER LUIS AMANDO PENA HAS BEEN HELD UNDER HOUSE ARREST ON FLIMSY CHARGES OF AIDING THE ANTI-SANDINISTA FREEDOM FIGHTERS.

(3 did not participate)

THIS ACTIVITY CALLS TO MIND THE TREATMENT OF FOREIGN PRIESTS UNDER SOMOZA - VEHEMENT LANGUAGE, EXPULSIONS AND DETENTION ON TRUMPED-UP CHARGES ALL MARKED THE SOMOZA DAYS. FIVE YEARS AGO THE PEOPLE OF NICARAGUA THOUGHT THOSE DAYS WERE OVER. NOW THEY FIND THEMSELVES FACING TYRANNY ON A MORE BRUTAL SCALE AND THEY WONDER IF THE U.S. WILL AGAIN HEAR THEIR CRIES.

IN 1978-79, THE U.S. MADE NO ATTEMPT TO PROP UP THE SOMOZA GOVERNMENT. IN FACT, IT WAS THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE WHO HELPED NEGOTIATE A POLITICAL SOLUTION AND GAIN RECOGNITION FOR A COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC REFORMERS AND MARXIST-LENINIST GUERRILLA COMMANDERS.

THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES GRANTED THE NEW SANDINISTA GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION BASED ON THEIR PROMISES TO HOLD ELECTIONS, ESTABLISH DEMOCRACY AND RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS. AS A SIGN OF OUR GOOD FAITH, THE UNITED STATES SENT \$118 MILLION IN AID DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE SANDINISTA REGIME. PRESIDENT CARTER SUSPENDED AID IN JANUARY 1981 WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE SANDINISTAS WERE ACTIVELY EXPORTING REVOLUTION TO EL SALVADOR.

PRESIDENT REAGAN RESUMED AID WHEN HE CAME INTO OFFICE ONLY TO FIND THAT SANDINISTA SUPPORT FOR THE SALVADORAN TERRORISTS CONTINUED UNABATED. HE TOO DECIDED TO SUSPEND AMERICAN ASSISTANCE.

BY THIS TIME, THE SPRING OF 1981, THE SANDINISTAS HAD ALREADY MOVED NICARAGUA FIRMLY INTO THE SOVIET AND CUBAN CAMP. CUBAN, SOVIET, EAST GERMAN, BULGARIAN, NORTH KOREAN, LIBYAN AND PLO ADVISERS BEGAN ARRIVING IN NICARAGUA A FEW WEEKS AFTER THE SANDINISTA TAKEOVER, WHILE U.S. AID WAS STILL FLOWING INTO THE COUNTRY. IT WAS NOT THE U.S. THAT FORCED THE SANDINISTAS INTO THE ARMS OF THE SOVIETS; THE SANDINISTA LEADERSHIP DRAGGED THE PEOPLE OF NICARAGUA INTO THE SOVIET BLOC.

THESE TWO MEN HAVE EXPERIENCED SANDINISTA BETRAYAL AND HAVE SEEN
NICARAGUA DRAGGED UNWILLINGLY DOWN THE PATH TOWARD COMMUNIST
TOTALITARIANISM. THEIR TESTIMONY IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE AS THE
U.S. DEBATES ITS POLICIES IN THE REGION.